

Land Use Planning in British Columbia: *Mineral Exploration and Mining*



Why Land Use Planning?

Critical minerals are a generational opportunity in B.C., with anticipated billions in investment and growth opportunities for many regions of the province. How can the responsible development of these and other minerals coincide with respect for Indigenous rights, while addressing broader socio-economic and environmental objectives? B.C. believes land use planning (LUP) will be foundational to a balanced and sustainable approach. Land use plans will improve clarity for resource operations on the land base and enable collaboration and partnerships between First Nations, the provincial government, communities, and industry.

Who is Involved?

The B.C. government is partnering with First Nations rights holders on LUP to develop a shared vision for resource management and stewardship in B.C. Planning processes include collaboration and engagement with local governments, stakeholders, industry, and communities to consider their interests in the process and to recommend direction that reflects environmental, cultural, social, and economic values identified in planning areas.

Planning for Different Values:

LUP supports the preservation of cultural values, healthy ecosystems, and economic opportunities by setting high-level strategic direction for plan areas — helping to define ‘what’ can occur and ‘where’ on land and water. It is a transparent, inclusive process that can be modified over time. High-level strategic land use direction helps to support the recently announced B.C. Critical Minerals Strategy in the long term by increasing certainty and predictability on the land base for all.

Mining and Exploration in Land Use Plans:

Provincial LUP in the 1990s and early 2000s was largely focused on forestry and protected areas rather than on mineral exploration and mining. New land use plans may set new management direction to guide sustainable and responsible exploration and development of mineral, placer, sand and gravel, and coal resources (hereinafter referred to collectively as ‘mining’) where appropriate.

Enhanced Clarity and Competitiveness:

In partnering to develop a shared vision and direction for resource management and stewardship, B.C. and First Nations planning partners will be working together with all parties, including mining proponents, to provide greater certainty, predictability, and up-front clarity on the land base. Participation in the planning process and the creation of new land use plans can help set the mining industry up for success in developing strong relationships with First Nations on whose land they operate. During the land use planning process, exploration on existing tenures and mining operations can continue.

Ensuring responsible resource development with the support of First Nations partners can also enhance B.C.'s global competitiveness as a destination for environmental, social, and governance (ESG)-focused mining investment.



Key Facts about Mining and Land Use Planning:

- LUP incorporates the mining-related interests of local governments, stakeholders, and communities in socio-economic assessments and in the development of new management direction.
- Mineral deposits that can be mined economically are rare, so mineral potential mapping and other geological and sector data products are assessed throughout LUP processes to ensure that high potential exploration and mining opportunities, and the economic benefits that they represent, are considered in land use decisions.
- The LUP process provides an opportunity to assess, evaluate, and develop management direction within planning areas, including management direction applicable to mining. This can provide increased clarity on where and how activities related to mining may occur within planning areas and can improve the effectiveness of the provincial regulatory regime.
- LUP processes between First Nations, the Province, industry, and local government will create certainty on the land base that will set the stage regionally for the growth of the critical minerals sector and implementation of a modernized *Mineral Tenure Act*. The *Mineral Tenure Act* modernization process and LUP processes are happening concurrently and have their own respective mandates.

Learn More Online At:

www.gov.bc.ca/landuseplanning